

## WE CLAIM

1. A method of determining a media colorant of a printing cartridge, the method comprising the step of reading a barcode depicted on a housing of the printing cartridge with a linear reader positioned in a printing device with which the printing cartridge is engaged, the barcode defining a code representing data relating to the media colorant of the printing cartridge.
2. A printing cartridge that is releasably engageable with a printing device having a linear reader for reading a barcode and a central processor capable of interpreting data carried on a barcode, the printing cartridge comprising
  - a housing;
  - a media colorant supply arrangement positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media colorant;
  - a feed mechanism positioned in the housing for feeding the media colorant to a printing mechanism; and
  - a barcode depicted on the housing, the barcode being readable by the linear reader and defining a code representing data relating to the media colorant.
3. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 2, in which the barcode is positioned on the housing so that the linear reader of the printing device reads the barcode during engagement of the printing cartridge with the printing device.
4. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 1, wherein the code defined by the barcode represents data related to at least one of: a serial number identifying the media colorant, a type of the media colorant, a viscosity of the media colorant, a surface tension of the media colorant, optical characteristics of the media colorant and an optimal ink drop volume corresponding to a type of media.
5. A method of determining media of a printing cartridge, the method comprising the step of reading a barcode depicted on a housing of the printing cartridge with a linear reader positioned in a printing device with which the printing cartridge is engaged, the barcode defining a code representing data relating to the media of the printing cartridge.
6. A printing cartridge that is releasably engageable with a printing device having a linear reader for reading a barcode and a central processor capable of interpreting data carried on a barcode, the printing cartridge comprising
  - a housing;
  - a media supply arrangement positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media;
  - a feed mechanism positioned in the housing for feeding the media to a printing mechanism; and
  - a barcode depicted on the housing, the barcode being readable by the linear reader and defining a code representing data relating to the media.
7. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 6, in which the barcode is positioned on the housing so that the linear reader of the printing device reads the barcode during engagement of the printing cartridge with the printing device.

8. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 6, wherein the code defined by the barcode represents data related to at least one of: a serial number identifying the media, a type of the media and a length of the media.

9. A method of determining media and media colorant of a printing cartridge, the method comprising the step of reading a barcode depicted on a housing of the printing cartridge with a linear reader positioned in a printing device with which the printing cartridge is engaged, the barcode defining a code representing data relating to the media and the media colorant of the printing cartridge.

10. A printing cartridge that is releasably engageable with a printing device having a linear reader for reading a barcode and a central processor capable of interpreting data carried on a barcode, the printing cartridge comprising  
a housing;  
media and media colorant supply arrangements positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media and a supply of media colorant, respectively;  
feed mechanisms positioned in the housing for feeding the media and the media colorant to a printing mechanism;  
and  
a barcode depicted on the housing, the barcode being readable by the linear reader and defining a code representing data relating to the media and the media colorant.

11. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 10, in which the barcode is positioned on the housing so that the linear reader of the printing device reads the barcode during engagement of the printing cartridge with the printing device.

12. A printing cartridge as claimed in claim 10, wherein the code defined by the barcode represents data related to at least one of: a serial number identifying the media, a serial number identifying the media colorant, a length of the media, a type of the media, a viscosity of the media colorant, a surface tension of the media colorant, optical characteristics of the media colorant and an optimal ink drop volume of the media colorant corresponding to the type of media.

13. A printing device which comprises  
a body, a printing cartridge being engageable with the body, the printing cartridge having a housing, a media colorant supply arrangement positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media colorant and a feed mechanism positioned in the housing for feeding the media colorant to a printing mechanism, a barcode being depicted on the housing and defining a code representing data relating to the media colorant;  
a processor positioned in the body to control operation of the feed mechanism and the printing mechanism; and  
a linear reader positioned in the body to read the barcode and to provide the processor with said code.

14. A printing device as claimed in claim 13, in which the linear reader comprises a barcode scanner and the processor includes a scanner interface connected to the barcode scanner to interpret a signal received from the barcode scanner into said code.

15. A printing device as claimed in claim 14, in which the processor incorporates a memory module in which a lookup table is stored, the lookup table being accessible by the processor and containing codes representing data relating to the media colorant and corresponding to possible codes defined by the barcode.

16. A printing device which comprises

a body, a printing cartridge being engageable with the body, the printing cartridge having a housing, a media supply arrangement positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media and a feed mechanism positioned in the housing for feeding the media to a printing mechanism, a barcode being depicted on the housing and defining a code representing data relating to the media;

a processor positioned in the body to control operation of the feed mechanism and the printing mechanism; and  
a linear reader positioned in the body to read the barcode and to provide the processor with said code.

17. A printing device as claimed in claim 16, in which the linear reader comprises a barcode scanner and the processor includes a scanner interface connected to the barcode scanner to interpret a signal received from the barcode scanner into said code.

18. A printing device as claimed in claim 16, in which the processor incorporates a memory module in which a lookup table is stored, the lookup table being accessible by the processor and containing codes representing data relating to the media and corresponding to possible codes defined by the barcode.

19. A printing device which comprises

a body, a printing cartridge being engageable with the body, the printing cartridge having a housing, media colorant and media supply arrangements positioned within the housing and containing a supply of media and media colorant and feed mechanisms positioned in the housing for feeding the media and the media colorant to a printing mechanism, a barcode being depicted on the housing and defining a code representing data relating to the media colorant and the media;

a processor positioned in the body to control operation of the feed mechanisms and the printing mechanism;  
and

a linear reader positioned in the body to read the barcode and to provide the processor with said code.

20. A printing device as claimed in claim 19, in which the linear reader comprises a barcode scanner and the processor includes a scanner interface connected to the barcode scanner to interpret a signal received from the barcode scanner into said code.

21. A printing device as claimed in claim 19, in which the processor incorporates a memory module in which a lookup table is stored, the lookup table being accessible by the processor and containing codes representing data relating to the media colorant and the media and corresponding to possible codes defined by the barcode.

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